

NEWINGTON TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

February 12, 2020

Chairman Pane called the regular meeting of the Newington Town Plan and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room L101 in the Newington Town Hall, 131 Cedar Street, Newington, Connecticut.

I. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

II. **ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Commissioners Present

Chairman Domenic Pane
Commissioner Anthony Claffey
Commissioner Michael Fox
Commissioner Garrett Havens
Commissioner David Lenares
Commissioner Stanley Sobieski
Commissioner Braverman-A
Commissioner Thomas Gill-A
Commissioner Bryan Haggerty-A

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Stephen Woods

Staff Present

Craig Minor, Town Planner
Andrew Armstrong, Asst. Town Planner/ZEO

III. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Craig Minor: I recommend that we remove under New Business Item A Petition 21-19. The applicant has asked that we table it. He is not ready. He can't be here tonight.

Commissioner Claffey: I have a question on that. This has been on multiple months, weeks, is there any time table for approval from any other departments that are impacted by us continuing to table this?

Craig Minor: Not any other departments, we have actually gone beyond the 65 days required by statute where we need to act, so he has given us his permission to go beyond the 65 days. That's fine, there is no problem with that. In an e-mail.

Chairman Pane: I hope everyone understand that, thank you very much Mr. Planner.

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (For items not listed on the agenda; speakers limited to two minutes.

Rose Lyons 46 Elton Drive: As you all know, I don't normally go onto Facebook and ask questions, I come right to the source. So Andrew, you probably know what my question is going to be. There was a firestorm about someone getting a letter from the Town about their

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Town Clerk

Christmas lights, and then mentioned that it could have been his inflatables, and I'm just curious if we can set the record straight, as to what happened, how it happened, and is it going to continue to happen as a Town regulation or violation that was cited, and I would once again ask that if in fact you consider the Town being held to the same standards as it is holding its residents. I have this picture here that was provided to me, but I'm just curious.

Andrew Armstrong: It wasn't a zoning violation, it actually was a blight violation. It was not for Christmas lights, it was actually related to multiple inflatables, I would say eight, laying in the street, excuse me, across the lawn, sidewalk and the bushes. Personal decorations were knocked over, laying partially on the sidewalk and the property was just not being maintained as it should. If it was maintained, that would be fine, but it was just not being maintained up to community standards.

Rose Lyons: There have been other questions on Facebook about people that normally wouldn't be getting exciting getting other notifications from the Town.

Chairman Pane: I'm going to have Andrew hold off, when you finish all of your comments, then I will have him answer the last part of your question. Do you have anything else?

Rose Lyons: Basically it was on a recent flurry of comments on Facebook about people going out and what I heard the Town Manager say last night that he would be riding around and he would be reporting the violations. I don't have a problem with that, because I know that there are people who don't want to report their neighbors for fear of either retaliation or whatever the case may be, but I do think that the public should be notified that we are going to get tough and have people start cleaning up their yards.

I will clean up near my little lilac bush so that during the summer when I am out there entertaining my neighbors, we will have a little ambiance, but I get it. Showing the picture I have here tonight says it all. That is not acceptable, that is not what Newington should be about.

Andrew Armstrong: Thank you. The photo that was on social media didn't represent the exterior and all.

Rose Lyons: It doesn't give a true picture and it doesn't give you a chance to explain. That's why I am asking the question. I am not criticizing.

Andrew Armstrong: I appreciate it. Thank you Rose.

Commissioner Claffey: With what Rose said about some of our town, you know, downtown has the lights on the trees, are we following through with those departments maintaining them, or other items that are broken or like a parking sign that might be falling over, or a directional sign, just so the transparency between our own departments and the general public.....

Andrew Armstrong: I have never received any complaints and it wasn't Christmas lights that were the issue, so.....

Commissioner Claffey: It's not about just that, but I think there had been some chatter about other things, some people say we don't maintain our own buildings, why are you coming down so hard on us? I just want to make sure that we have the transparency with other departments, hey your building isn't up to snuff, you are held as responsible too.

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Rose Lyons 46 Elton Drive: As you all know, I don't normally go onto Facebook and ask questions, I come right to the source. So Andrew, you probably know what my question is going to be. There was a firestorm about someone getting a letter from the Town about their

Craig Minor: The Town Manager told me that he will in fact hold each department that has responsibility for the physical things in town to do the right thing and maintain whatever they are responsible for. The Highway garage, the superintendent will keep it neat, the Parks and Rec Department, has a garage where they keep salt and whatever, and he expects the Parks and Rec Department to keep those buildings and the pools attractive. Just like private citizens should. So there will be no double standard.

Chairman Pane: Anyone else from the public like to come up? State your name and address for the record.

Brian DiChicchio, 188 Costello Road: I have talked with Town staff on a couple of punch list items and one of the questions that I have is an island, it's 20 x 40 and it's considered green space. I'm asking permission to consider decorative stone in lieu of grass. I would welcome your thoughts and comments.

Chairman Pane: And this is at the rear of the building, or the side of the building?

Brian DiChicchio: It's not the street side, you can't see it off the street, it's the rear of the building.

Chairman Pane: And would you be willing to put some plants in there?

Brian DiChicchio: Sure, it would dress it up a little bit.

Chairman Pane: I'm going to go to Commissioner Claffey because I believe that he has driven down there. This building is at the end of Costello Road. I commend you, you have done a nice job with the building. It's beautifully landscaped in front and it has come out nice. It's in an industrial area, it's at the end of Costello Road. Across the street are two vacant lots, and some woods at the end of Costello Road and just really beautifies the end of the road. I think you have done a nice job with it, and if I'm not mistaken Commissioner Claffey has driven the area.....

Commissioner Claffey: I have driven up there, I think it was the past Saturday, don't ask me why I went up there, I just hadn't been up that way in a while. I think it was because I recall that you came in a year or so ago about it, but I've been up there, nonetheless, I believe hydroseeded, good size trees planted in the front, have the stakes in it for growth. The addition, I think it was an addition or renovation addition changed some things, from a landscaping side it looked fine. I couldn't get to look where you are speaking of directly, because the gate was closed, it was access only for staff and trucks and it's not a public access where I think you are speaking of, the far back corner. You having made it look good, some of the other businesses around could make theirs look as good with the green space, it would be great so I don't see a problem, but we should get everyone's opinion and especially the Town Planner to make sure it meets the regulations.

Chairman Pane: Any other Commissioners?

Commissioner Lenares: I've never been to the property, but I'm just assuming that it is green space on your property and you want to put stone versus grass. It's easier to maintain, and actually it looks nicer. I'd be all in favor without even looking at it, that's great.

Chairman Pane: He does have the whole front of the building that faces the street is all grass and then the front of the building has stone and plants and then there is this long 20 foot area

towards the rear or the side of the building basically that he is referencing. So it's not like he is not going to have any grass, it's just that, if I'm not mistaken, he didn't want to have to go up and cut the grass on that one island.

Brian DiChicco: Town staff has been out there and they talked it over and it's just this one island. The landscaping is per the plan and it's seeded.

Commissioner Fox: I wasn't aware of this item that this was something we did. If I had I would have gone up there and I would have had the same opinion as you two.

Chairman Pane: This just came up last minute but I think in our travels, Anthony just happened to go up there. I didn't talk to Anthony, and I try to drive the Town and look at things that might be coming up and everything, and he has done a nice job on the building. I don't have a problem and if there are no other objections, I do think if I'm not mistaken the Town Planner is going to want you to modify your plan, so I'll ask the Planner for a report.

Craig Minor: I was just looking at the regulations and unfortunately our landscaping regulations are scattered throughout different chapters of the book but there is a regulation that says the Commission can allow some of the required green space to be provided in the form of decorative stone or words to that effect, but the regulation specifically says that the Commission has to grant that modification if you will. So if the Commission is so inclined, I have no objection with the understanding that the applicant will have to submit a revised plan eventually showing the change in the approved landscaping.

Commissioner Claffey: Can he provide it in a small section instead of bringing in a whole 24 x 36?

Craig Minor: It's really no difference, anyway he still has to have his landscape architect make that change to the plan, yes, the plan is 24 x 36 but he still needs to make that change to the plan. That really wouldn't save him anything.

Chairman Pane: Are there any other comments or questions from the Commissioners? If there is no objection, I'm okay with it, thank you for doing a nice job on the building and the landscaping, and just touch base with the Planner at some time so that you can modify the plans.

Brian DiChicco: Thank you. Thank you for your time.

Chairman Pane: Are there any other public comments?

V. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT

Andrew Armstrong: Good evening everyone. I did not receive any new temporary sign applications as far as renewals or new. Are there any questions on the January 2020 ZEO report?

Commissioner Claffey: I have a couple of questions. One is very basic. I've been noticing a lot of, this report and a few previous, a lot of the, running a business in violation. Is there a way to put in the report what the business is that is being run so that we kind of have an idea. I don't want to assume. Say landscape, possible landscape business running, but further information required.

Andrew Armstrong: Sure.

Commissioner Claffey: That way we will know what rules or regulations they are by-passing. The other question I have is on page 4 and 5, the 584 Main Street, I'm trying to place this one and I can't, I think I know what house it is, is it the one that.....

Andrew Armstrong: It's a blue house, it's almost in line with, across the street from the B & D Auto, but it's a few homes down.

Commissioner Claffey: Do they have a green and yellow food trailer?

Andrew Armstrong: Correct.

Commissioner Claffey: That has kind of crept its way behind the house. First it was in the driveway, then it went a little farther back, farther back, okay. We've cited them and it's in court.....

Andrew Armstrong: Well, it's actually, we had a citation hearing on the 27th. The hearing officer upheld the citation and agreed with the Town, and they have 30 days from that date, which is February 26th, to appeal it to the court. At this time there are no further violations, and I've passed the property a few times and the food truck is gone.

Chairman Pane: And it really wasn't the truck parked there, it was the other associated activities that really contributed to this problems. For instance, possibly coming in late hours with a back up alarm, coming in and working in the middle of the night, am I correct?

Andrew Armstrong: Yes, and food deliveries, two commercial vehicles, a lot of different activities there.

Chairman Pane: Anything else from the Commissioners on this report? I did talk to Andrew about him looking at the regulations, now that he is going through the Town, there might be some areas where he might want to come back to this Commission and modify the regulations for cars being parked, trucks, things like that so I don't know if you want to touch upon that or if you are working on that.

Craig Minor: We have two related issues here, there are our whole business regulations of which we have a couple of different flavors, and we have the regulation that allows home owners to have one, what I call oversize vehicles on their property. That regulation is extremely complicated, nobody understands it. We tried to improve it a couple of years ago, we made it worse, I think both of those regulations should definitely be re-visited and the staff will come back to you with a simpler, proposed simplification of both of those in the future.

Chairman Pane: That will make all of the Commissioners happy that we modify that and make it a little more business friendly and something that is understandable.....

Craig Minor: And homeowner friendly too.

Chairman Pane: Homeowner friendly, yes.

Craig Minor: We want to protect the homeowners, yet the small business owner who bring a pickup truck home at the end of the day, that shouldn't be.....

Chairman Pane: Or is someone is on call and they have to take their vehicle home, there are a lot of different circumstances, so I trust that you both will be working on that and will come

back to this Commission with something that you think will improve those regulations. Thank you. Any questions from the Commissioners? Thank you very much.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 22, 2020 Regular Meeting
January 22, 2020 Special Meeting

Commissioner Sobieski moved to accept the minutes of the January 22, 2020 Regular Meeting and the January 22, 2020 Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fox. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

VII. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Claffey: Mr. Planner, I see on your monthly report over the past two months meeting with, and I'm going to use the term loosely because there is a brewery application and I notice that it comes up again and again, every month, and my question is more for all of the businesses that may want to move into town. Are some of our regulations causing some businesses problems with opening up in town because, let me use the brewery, we don't have something in our regulations, or other businesses that are causing conflict.

Craig Minor: If somebody wanted to open a brewery in Newington no problem, it's just another manufacturing activity, there would be no problem. Now days however people don't want to open just a brewery, they want a brewery and a tap room or a tavern associated with it and that gets tricky because the brewery itself is a manufacturing operation, but you don't normally want it in a retail zone, so other towns have already dealt with this, I've already gotten some really good regulations, simple regulations from other towns, and what I have been doing is as people approach me with an interest in doing this in Newington and I give them a copy of the regs that I have acquired and encouraged them to just submit it. They end up losing that location, or deciding to go somewhere else, so the people that I have been dealing with up until now have given up, but just today, literally today, I got a phone call from another individual who is interested in a brew pub. They have a location in mind on the Berlin Turnpike, great spot for it, and I just sent him a copy of the regulations which I would support which are pretty simple and hopefully then he will petition the Commission to adopt these regulations.

Chairman Pane: We as Commissioners could ask you to bring that in, couldn't we?

Craig Minor: You could initiate it, yes.

Commissioner Claffey: The question I have, not just for the brewery, I only used the brewery because it came up in your report in the past sixty days and I thought it was odd because it's really more carte blanche to every kind of, not that we have to change specifically, but are there any other, you know, when you talk about the TOD and stuff like that, but are there any other businesses off the top of your head and are like leaving because we don't have a simple regulation for that activity?

Craig Minor: No one has ever left Newington because we didn't have one, they just haven't yet come here because we didn't have a regulation that made it easy for them.

Commissioner Claffey: Like you said, if it was just brewery, if they just wanted to manufacture, then there are guidelines, but when they want to put in the little bit of, they want

to stay there and drink, you want to sell it, you want to do this. I think you get my point. Is there something lacking?

Commissioner Sobieski: Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't there X number of permits for each town for liquor and liquor establishments and bars?

Craig Minor: Yes.

Commissioner Sobieski: And is the brewery itself considered a bar?

Craig Minor: I don't know.

Chairman Pane: There are only so many liquor stores allowed, but bars, I think it's only liquor permits. There are only seven liquor permits in town I think it is, but not bars.

Commissioner Fox: I think that is considered retail liquor, retail liquor sales, not grocery or beer permits.

Chairman Pane: I think you're right. Naturally I think the Planner would come to us if he saw a problem with some other type of business with our regulations, and I think on this brewery one instead of waiting for somebody to come into us, if there is no objection I would ask the Planner to bring it to us at the next meeting that he has it available. Is that all right with everyone?

Commissioners: Fine.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Petition 41-19: Residential Subdivision at 55 East Robbins Avenue, Dornelas Home Improvement LLC, Owner/Applicant, Helton Dornelas, 65 Wood Pond Road, Farmington CT, Contact

Tabled

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None

X. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Chairman Pane: We touched on your Town Planner report briefly unless you have something else?

Craig Minor: Just to give you a heads up, and I mentioned it briefly at the last meeting, you will be getting an application for a residential subdivision in the next month or two. It's that large meadow on the corner of Griswoldville and Deming Road. It's the Peckham property. Some of you may remember a couple of years ago it, at that time the Open Space Committee was looking into whether it would make sense for the Town to acquire it, but the family wants top dollar for it, so it wasn't viable to sell it to the Town. So they will be coming to you in the next month or so for a subdivision, a cul-de-sac, a dozen houses or so.

Chairman Pane: All R-20 lots I think.

Craig Minor: Right. Someone else mentioned that the Town Manager sees his role as being, more so than previous town managers, is to take an active role in Economic Development. He sees the Town Planner also taking an active role in Economic Development, so he and I will be working together attracting new businesses to Newington and doing whatever we can to keep the residents happy, so I will be doing more of that in the future. That's all I have for tonight.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Sobieski: Whatever I get I pass right out, everybody has gotten e-mails on it.

Commissioner Claffey: On the surrounding towns, any hot button items in the surrounding towns. West Hartford had a hot button over by Westfarms Mall, they called a special meeting so that they could change things. Any other towns around like Berlin....

Craig Minor: That's a good question. We get notice from CRCOG whenever a town that surrounds us is changing the regulations, and there are six towns that surround us actually. We get lots of regulations from other towns and things that they do, and I always look at them carefully to see if there is anything that would be of interest to Newington, and once in a while I will bring something to your attention but when Westfarms Mall wants to put solar panels on the far side of their shopping center, I didn't bother bringing that to you.

Commissioner Claffey: The particular item I was speaking of was the change of zoning that intersected the property line and the building, part of the building was in Newington and part of the building was in West Hartford. That whole, Babies 'R Us, they changed something so that they could have, it was weird, a retail business there, but they had a weird, that whole four corners of town, can have a weird, I remember when we put in the Sleep Number Bed...

Craig Minor: Yes, okay, I hadn't read anything but I know what you are referring to because the Attorney representing the business that wants to move into that building which is partly in Newington and partly in West Hartford, it is in the Commercial zone, which is a strange zone in Newington, there are only a couple of pockets of it in town, where very limited things are allowed, like conference centers, but there is this retail building in the northwest corner of Newington just on the town line, that it is in the C Zone, but it's a retail building. So the Attorney called me and said that her client was looking to buy it and she wanted to make sure that there wouldn't be any problems with the continuation of a non-conforming use is what it was, and I did some research as to how it got approved. At that time it was an entirely different zone and I told her that was no problem with Newington allowing you to continue the grandfathered use, so that might be what you were talking about.

Commissioner Claffey: Exactly.

XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (For items not listed on the agenda; speakers limited to two minutes.

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: I want to thank you for answering my questions on the Facebook item, and another question, is the zoning and blight violations, are they going to be just not complaint driven as they have been, the way I understood it in the past they were complaint driven, now it seems that you are actively going out, not you in particular, actively looking for these violations. Just a question.

The second thing is, during Public Participation, Mr. DiChicchio came and spoke to you regarding some issues with his business. I've never seen it before in Public Participation. Is

this normal that a company ask for an opinion of the Commission before he applies for site plan approval? I have never seen it. It's just a learning thing for me.

POCD, I have not been watching that and am just curious as to when the next meeting is, public hearing?

Craig Minor: The public meeting, the public information meeting will be two weeks from tonight. It will be in lieu of TPZ's regular meeting and it will be in the auditorium at seven o'clock.

Rose Lyons: And the complete street project is coming here for an 8-24 referral I'm guessing, and would just like conformation because there is going to be a change in the configuration of town roads. It wouldn't have to come if they didn't touch anything? If they were just doing the state roads, they wouldn't need your approval? I'm just curious. Thank you.

Chairman Pane: Thank you. On the 8-24 that's correct. If it were just a mill overlay of the road, it would not be necessary to come, but because there is a reconfiguration here, they are sending the 8-24.

As far as the blight/zoning violations they are still going to be taking complaints, if there are any complaints, but they are taking a pro-active role in looking around the town, and trying to clean things up so that we have a good appearance in the town and I think that is a good thing.

The POCD was answered, coming up in two weeks.

The site plan for DiChicchio, he already had a site plan approval. The project is almost complete and yes, it's not normally where somebody comes in and asks for a small modification, but because this was such a small modification I let him speak instead of coming in and applying for a formal request. The Planner was extremely reasonable to also accommodate him, and that's what I think we are all about.

You talk about the blight and I think at the Council they talked about human trafficking and made reference to the Berlin Turnpike. It wasn't too long ago that we had, there was supposed to be a task force looking at the hotels on the Berlin Turnpike because there was trafficking going on, there were illegal drugs, there was prostitution, there were all sorts of things going on in a few isolated hotels on the Berlin Turnpike. Matter of fact, some other towns when they have hotels coming in to them they always reference Newington and it's not good stuff that they have to say. So, I'm not sure if there is still a task force or there isn't a task force, or there was never a task force, but I would like this committee to think about whether or not we should ask the Mayor, the Council and the Manager to look into improving, let's say not improving, but addressing a few hotels on the turnpike that are taking up a majority of, a lot of time from the police department. I'm hearing that they are there maybe four or five times a week. Even three times a week is way too much. If they are three times going to the same hotel, week after week after week, that's a draw on our police force. That's not a business that is probably complying with everything and I think, if I'm not mistaken, there were some safety concerns and possible violations for safety and whether or not they are truly operating a hotel or if they are operating an apartment or what, so I know some of the existing Commissioners are familiar with this topic, this might be new to some of the other Commissioners. This is something that I think we should think about and then maybe at our next meeting we should come to a conclusion on steps that we can take to encourage some improvement.

Commissioner Claffey: We had Andrew run some information, he just went out, picked a bunch of different ones, I don't think he piggy-backed onto any, got with Chief Clark, came back with a report, and I think it died after that. This was last spring maybe. The discussion, we were doing some other things, we had, the train station came in....

Commissioner Sobieski: I agree with you one hundred percent Domenic that we need to do something up there, my thing is, and I think we asked Chief Clark to get us some rough idea of what the complaints are. If hotel A for instance gets a lot of complaints, that is something that should be honed in on. I also think we need to work with the Police Department, there is something going on up there, it's either the Town or it's obviously affecting Wethersfield and maybe Berlin, I don't know. I don't know what ones we are talking about, but I do see Rooms for Rent on a weekly basis which I don't think is what they were supposed to be doing, I could be wrong and I think that was one issue and then there is one renting for three or four hours, whatever the hell it was.

Chairman Pane: I think it is something that we should look at and try to have the Town try to look at it, and I think that you are right, it is something that not only the Zoning Enforcement Officer but the Police Chief and the Town Attorney, along with the Town Manager need to collaborate together and any necessary staff to address the problem.

Craig Minor: And Human Services because for a lot of people, this is their last resort. They are not criminals, they are just people with no money. They may have minimum wage jobs, so they have enough money to pay monthly rent at one of these places, but they don't have enough money for two months deposit to get an apartment.

Commissioner Claffey: That was the tough situation that we have to try to eloquently try to deal with.

Commissioner Sobieski: When I was on, we always had the one at the top of the hill, Siesta Motel. That was good for a call a week, or two. I'm talking 1970.

Chairman Pane: So the last thing is, I asked the, at one of our last meetings we talked about the regulations for the TVDD compared to our TOD regulations and I had the Planner make everybody a copy. This is the lengthy TVDD regulation. If the Commissioners could look at it so that we could have a conversation as to whether or not you want to keep this going or whether or not we want to have a regulation that is consistent with all three of our potential TOD areas. I think we all, if a train station is coming, I think we are all in favor of it, but we just want to protect the certain areas, protect the Industrial and protect the general area, so it's not like we are against the train station, but we want it to work within the Town. Even Glenn, who is doing our 2020 plan had some concerns about how this, depending on what we do with that area could take away from the Town Center and we certainly don't want to take away from our town center. So, all I ask is, if you could look at this between now and the next meeting so we could have a conversation about it.

Commissioner Claffey: To clarify this document, this is just TVDD for Cedar Street for the acreage and land south.....

Craig Minor: If you look at the very last page.

Commissioner Claffey: I just want to make sure some of the newer Commissioners don't confuse it with the TOD, which is in the same vicinity but separate.

Craig Minor: On Fenn Road.

Commissioner Claffey: On Fenn Road and Cedar and the way down on Willard.

Craig Minor: We don't have anything over there, we don't have a TOD for Newington Junction.

Chairman Pane: That's why I'm asking if we could group the three areas together with some sort of friendly regulation that works, that states that we are not against the train station but we want to make sure that the surrounding areas are protected and that it works. Any comments or questions on the TVDD, or anything else?

XIII. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Gill: I have two questions. As far as charging stations, Tesla type of station for recharging vehicles, do we have anything in our regs as far as those being allowed, or how does somebody get that pushed in.

Craig Minor: We do have a few in town, some on private property, some like the Town Center parking lot. The ones that are on private property, basically the owner wanted to do it, he wanted to put in a charging station in his parking spaces so we just allowed it. We didn't make a big deal about it. Some towns mandate a certain percentage of charging stations, the cities, the bigger towns, and it makes sense to mandate, if you believe in government regulations, it makes sense to mandate some number of charging stations for the big cities, but Newington, it didn't seem to be a problem for us to bring it to you to recommend that you amend your parking lot regulations to require a minimum number of charging stations, or bike racks which again some cities require. I think at some point you probably will feel the need to adopt a regulation, but as of now, we don't require it, and we don't make it difficult for someone to do it if they want to.

Commissioner Gill: Okay, I just, I work for Eversource, and Tesla is coming in with a large scale charging areas, and the equipment that has to be put in is pretty good size also. One of my questions is, when that is put in there, do those parking spaces, are they now gone because they are being used.....

Chairman Pane: It is a parking space, but it has to be a parking and charging at the same time, right?

Craig Minor: I think it would depend on.....

Chairman Pane: How many?

Craig Minor: How many and what the purpose of them are. If some of these charging stations are for employee parking let's say, and then wouldn't be available for customers, and we require a minimum amount of customer parking, then maybe we would have to look closely at that, but without the specifics, I wouldn't be able to speculate, I'd be happy to meet with anyone and we can brainstorm whether Newington needs to amend the regulations or not to do whatever it is that Eversource or Tesla is thinking to do in Newington.

Commissioner Gill: I'm not saying that it is in Newington per se, it's just being rolled out right now, and Tesla has a lot of money and they are going at this in large areas.

Chairman Pane: We have one in the center of town that might have come from Tesla.

Craig Minor: No, actually we got a grant from the State to put that one in.

Commissioner Sobieski: There is one at Best Market and two I believe on Pane Road, some contractor has one.

Craig Minor: That's what I was referring to before, he just put them in, that's fine. No problem, and the same with Best Yet, they have two there also and they just put them in. I mean, they got a building permit for them, but it didn't need to come to us. I was aware of it, but it didn't need your approval because it didn't affect the number of parking spaces so it was no problem.

Chairman Pane: Any other questions?

Commissioner Gill: We had talked about at the POCD meeting, as far as bike paths, and I saw that the, Robbins Avenue, that project there, is going to have bike lanes there. Now who, that's our Town Engineer that is working on it, so if I have questions on that I can contact him?

Craig Minor: Yes, that would be good.

Commissioner Gill: One of the thoughts I have is that we were talking about bike paths maybe being put into the old 291 property and there is a possibility that that could tie in with this bike path that is going in the roadways. I was just wondering, as far as the engineer, how, could it tie in?

Commissioner Sobieski: I think, if I'm not mistaken, I went to the meeting at the Senior Center, this was several weeks ago, it is the second project on Maple Hill that will tie that in. I think they are going from there, and Craig, correct me if I'm wrong, I thought they were going from there over to New Britain Avenue.

Craig Minor: To Cedar Street actually.

Commissioner Sobieski: And to Cedar Street to tie it in.

Commissioner Gill: So it's going from Cedar Street, Maple Hill, down Robbins.....

Commissioner Sobieski: That another phase, this is the first phase.

Chairman Pane: Will that project come to us at all or no?

Craig Minor: The project that has been in the works for a year and a half now, what the Town Engineer called the 2018 grant project. That will come to you because they are proposing to make changes to the configuration of Robbins just to the east of where it meets with Maple Hill and because of the way it was written technically that will come to you on a referral, so yes.

Commissioner Claffey: Is it Robbins or is it Golf?

Craig Minor: It's where Golf intersects Robbins. That little parallel street, the name escapes me, right there, the design of this road involves changing the way that Golf intersects Robbins, so that will come to you for that reason.

Commissioner Sobieski: Golf will be capped off and you are going to come down through the green and tie in so there will be a four way interchange instead of an off-set dog leg.

Craig Minor: Right, so those plans will be brought to you and the Town Engineer will explain it to you and then you will have the opportunity to comment on it.

Chairman Pane: Any other questions from the Commissioners?

Commissioner Claffey: I have Mr. Minor, two concerns. One is on Alumni Road, there's, if you are coming from the Willard side, there is a big holding lot in the back for trucks, on the north side, I don't know if over time they got rid of the entry way and it's just mud, but sometimes they are tracking mud all the way down Willard, and it's not from the new place that they are just bulldozing.

Craig Minor: Okay, we will look into it.

Commissioner Claffey: Then secondly, we talked briefly about the hotels and I notice, to try to have transparency I've noticed we have gone after neighborhoods with blight, if you use the Grantmoor for example, on the Berlin Turnpike side they have bedsprings, old furniture, it's just an eyesore to begin with and I know that we cite residences for minor things and this has been going on. I know that they had a fire, and they are renovating, but you know..... I'm using that as an example that the blight can be on both sides.

Chairman Pane: I think the intention is to look at it throughout the Town, whether it is homeowners or businesses. Their intention is to have a consistent plan, a fair, consistent plan for everybody. That includes the residences and the businesses.

Commissioner Sobieski: Is the Grantmoor still open? I thought they had a fire and it wasn't safe any more.

Craig Minor: They had a fire, and I believe that they were back open rather quickly actually.

Chairman Pane: Any other remarks from Commissioners?

XIV. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

Chairman Pane: I have nothing else. I want to thank you for a short meeting and if there is no objection, a motion to adjourn.

XV. ADJOURN

Commissioner Sobieski moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Fox. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary